

VZCZCXRO7123
PP RUEHAG RUEHDF RUEHIK RUEHLZ RUEHROV RUEHSR
DE RUEHMD #0178 0501738
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
P 191738Z FEB 09
FM AMEMBASSY MADRID
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0237
INFO RUEHXX/ARAB ISRAELI COLLECTIVE
RUCNMEM/EU MEMBER STATES COLLECTIVE
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SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR EUR/WE, NEA/IPA

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [EFIN](#) [PGOV](#) [PTER](#) [PHUM](#) [KPAL](#) [KWBG](#) [SP](#)

SUBJECT: SPAIN'S EFFORTS SUPPORTING MARCH 2 GAZA DONOR'S
CONFERENCE IN EGYPT

REF: STATE 14575

¶1. Per reftel demarche, sources at the Spanish MFA have said that FM Moratinos spoke recently with Benjamin Netanyahu and Tzipi Livni, telling them that Spain will cooperate with new Israeli administration as soon as a coalition government is formed. Spain will continue its focus on multilateral efforts to achieve peace in the Middle East.

¶2. Soraya Rodriguez, MFA Secretary of State for International Cooperation, traveled to Jerusalem, Gaza and Ramallah on February 15 and 16 to assess reconstruction needs in the area. In Jerusalem she met with the technical cooperation experts in the Palestinian territories, the European Commission Humanitarian Assistance office and NGOs. Her other scheduled meetings included Palestinian Chief Negotiator Saeb Erekat and Palestinian Information Minister Riad al-Malki. So far, Spain has donated 6.5 million euros in humanitarian aid for Gaza's population.

¶3. The MFA is determining what other funding could be tapped for additional pledges at the March 2 Donors Conference in Sharm al-Sheikh. Foreign Minister Moratinos may be able to share more details with Secretary Clinton during their scheduled February 24 bilateral meeting in Washington.

CHACON